**Recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to Increase Public Awareness of Events Surrounding Internments of Japanese Americans During World War II**

***House of Representatives - February 26, 2003 (excerpts)***

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. Honda) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. HONDA. Before I get started, let me just compliment the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his patience in being here this evening. I appreciate your presence, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss House Resolution 56, a resolution I introduced earlier this month. This is a resolution supporting the goals of the Japanese American community and recognizing a national day of remembrance to increase the public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and the internments of individuals and families during World War II.

Let us be clear about this. In 1942, more than 120,000 people were rounded up in this country, primarily from the west coast, and incarcerated. Families were torn apart. Hardworking people had to sell their businesses for pennies on the dollar. Everything these people worked so hard for evaporated overnight. I spent part of my childhood in a camp in southeast Colorado, an internment camp called Amache. House Resolution 56 also recognizes that some in the German and the Italian communities experienced deprivation during this period as well.

This resolution has been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and has currently over 60 cosponsors. This year marks the 61st anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signing of executive order 9066 on February 19, 1942; and it is the 15th anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 signed by President Reagan.

The day of remembrance is as important now as it has ever been. We are again living in perilous times. Our country is at war against terrorism. We may soon be at war with Iraq. The history of World War II demonstrated that our Constitution is tested in times of trauma, tension, and turmoil. In 1942, our political leaders failed. Therefore, today we must work to educate the public about the internment of Americans today in order to prevent similar injustices to be forced upon other Americans. Our civil liberties have not been in as much risk since World War II, and this time we as political leaders cannot fail.

Many might be aware of the comments made by one of our colleagues earlier this month on a live radio call-in show. Our colleague said that he agreed that President Roosevelt's decision to sign executive order 9066 was appropriate. He said, with the information the President had at the time, he made the best decision he could. He also stated that the incarceration of Japanese Americans was for their own safety. In addition, statements were further made that some Japanese Americans during World War II were probably intent on doing us harm just as some Arab Americans are probably intent on doing harm to us today. Such statements are inaccurate and simply wrong. As my father always said to me when I was a child, if we were put in camps for our own protection,

then why were we the ones behind barbed wires and why were the machine guns pointed inwards toward us?

[Time: 20:30]

Furthermore, such statements from a government official are disturbing and dangerous, as they appear to endorse a policy of racial and ethnic profiling that has long been discredited. Saying that the internment of Japanese Americans was appropriate is simply unacceptable and factually inseparable.

One of the most concise rebuttals that I have read to the notion that Japanese Americans were placed in camps because they either posed a threat to national security or for their own safety comes from a law professor, Eric Muller, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in a letter dated February 7, 2003. And I would like to, Mr. Speaker, submit this letter into the record at this point without reading its full content. However, most importantly though, we must remember that the Commission on Wartime Relocation found that it was not a military necessity that the Japanese American community be rounded up from the west coast, but it was rather based upon race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure, and I will repeat, a failure of political leadership. This was probably the largest single act of racial and ethnic profiling conducted by our government in modern times.

True to the democratic process, however, our Nation has been able to look back and admit errors from its past. I can think of no greater evidence to show why the United States, with all its flaws, still is looked to worldwide as the Nation with the strongest and fairest form of government. By admitting that the government did wrong in its treatment of its citizens and legal residents who were aliens during World War II, Congress and the President reaffirmed our Nation's commitment to the principles founded in the Constitution. However, we must always be vigilant in the protection of our civil liberties, and in this time of tension as we wage a war against terrorism, we must again reaffirm our commitment to the principles in the Constitution. While national security is always a paramount concern for those of us making the laws as well as executing and interpreting the laws, we see that there are those in government who continue to pursue policies once again that target our civil liberties.

I find it disturbing that none of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have come out against the statements of this gentleman from North Carolina. But now more than ever, we must strive to balance our cherished civil liberties with the need to protect our homeland. Finding this balance is the enduring lesson that the Day of Remembrance resolution teaches and the lesson that cannot be lost on our Nation's policy makers and our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. Case) who represents probably a good portion of the population not only in the mainland, the U.S., but also in Hawaii.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding, and I bid him and my colleagues here in the House a very fond aloha from my home State of Hawaii.

As the gentleman has noted, my home State of Hawaii is a State that has a tremendous representation of people of Asian descent. Pacific islanders and Asians make up more than 50 percent of the composition of my State. So in areas of ethnic issues, we are particularly sensitive for both our history and for our modern day; and my State is a State

that is very proud of many things, many things about it, from our fantastic environment which so many people have enjoyed, to our native Hawaiian culture which has brought really to the world a spirit of aloha, a spirit of how to live together in harmony with both nature and with each other.

But I think the one thing that we are the most proud of in Hawaii and certainly that I am the most proud of in Hawaii, as somebody whose family goes back for four generations there, is our multiethnic tradition. We are again easily the most diverse ethnic composition of any State in the entire country. No ethnic group of the many that we have in Hawaii has a majority. The highest ethnic group in Hawaii has only about 26, 27 percent; the second highest, 24, 25 percent. So we are very conscious of our relationships with each other from an ethnic perspective, a State where over 50 percent now of all marriages are multiethnic marriages; over 50 percent of all births are multiethnic births, including my own children who carry the blood of eight separate ethnic groups in their own veins and carry it without anybody giving any thought to it whatsoever; and where Americans of Japanese ancestry have long been a very significant minority in our history.

So for all of us in Hawaii, all of us, whether we are of Japanese ancestry or Caucasian ancestry or Portuguese ancestry or Chinese ancestry or Korean or some of the more recent immigrant groups such as Marshallese, Laotian, Vietnamese, Thai, when we read of comments by one of my colleagues on the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, the Chair of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Homeland Security, the very subcommittee that is being called upon to make judgments on behalf of all of us in this country on matters of internal security, how we treat our citizens during a time of war, our reactions range from puzzlement, frankly, in some cases to outrage. And, Mr. Speaker, I must confess I do not really know myself what to make of those comments, because those thoughts expressed are so foreign to my own thinking and to the thinking of those in my State.

And as I went back to my district over the district work period and talked to my constituents, they brought up these comments. It was not really always a matter of outrage, although some were outraged. It was more a matter of puzzlement. What was it that was occurring? What was it that this colleague was thinking? What exactly was it? Was it just a slip of the tongue? We all make slips of the tongue, and we all are willing to forgive a slip of the tongue. Was it ignorance of the facts, or was it a reflection of more deliberate thinking? And unfortunately we do not know which one it is because, to this day, there has been no good explanation offered.

Personally I am willing to accept, and I think most of the people in my State and perhaps in the country are willing to accept, that it was ignorance; willing to accept, as my State legislature right now is resolving, that what is needed here is not any kind of accusations, not any kind of harsh words. What is really needed is education and sensitization to the fact, and that while we need to get beyond this specific incident, nonetheless it again tells us that we must remember that sometimes well-intentioned people can act inexcusably, out of simple ignorance, and that by constant remembrance we can avoid repeats.

So I want to remember today what happened in my own State during the time of the Second World War, during the time when 100-some-odd thousand-plus Americans of Japanese ancestry were rounded up and interned in internment camps on the U.S. mainland. I want to remember what happened in Hawaii because that is a part of this

story that is not often told. What happened in a State where 37 percent of the population on December 7, 1941, 37 percent were Americans of Japanese ancestry? What happened in a State which was the very site of the attack that put us into World War II? Again 37 percent, and this was not just an isolated population on the mainland. There were a number of Americans of Japanese ancestry mostly living in the smaller communities, not always but mostly. They were not quite as integrated into the society. In Hawaii it was a full integration. We had lived there. They had lived there for over 100 years. For decades they had been fully integrated into the society. In 1941 many were already serving in our U.S. Armed Forces. They had already been drafted. They were already serving in the famous 100th battalion, which was formed out of draftees prior to World War II, including my own former boss right here in this Chamber, my political mentor, the former U.S. Congressman and U.S. Senator from Hawaii, Spark Matsunaga. They were the vanguard of what became a legend in U.S. military history in the second world war because the 100th battalion and later the 442nd regimental combat team, which later merged, in which 3,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry from Hawaii volunteered, a unit which went on throughout the Second World War to become the most decorated unit for its size in the entire history of the United States military; a number of medals of honor including my colleague, the senior Senator from Hawaii, Daniel K. Inouye; a number of Distinguished Services Crosses, Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, French Croz de Guerres; 649 killed in action, 67 missing, 9,486 Purple Hearts.

These were people obviously that were dedicated to their country, and yet on December 8, 1941, 1,500 of them were rounded up, Japanese ancestry Americans living in Hawaii were rounded up and interned in Hawaii on Sand Island and interrogated. Some were released; but some, over half of them, were sent to the mainland and interned for the duration of the war. And not only did it affect them, it affected their families. In many cases they went to the mainland to become interned. Why? They were American citizens. Their families had lived in the United States in Hawaii. They were interned because they were educators, because they were Buddhist priests, because they were business leaders. If they were in positions of leadership in the Japanese community in Hawaii, they were suspect just because of that. And there was more than one case in which a son would serve his country in World War II on Anzio and other locations up and down Italy and France while his own father was interned in an internment camp in the United States. Imagine a son, imagine the dedication to a country of a son going into battle when his own father was interned. Yes, it was not as serious as the mainland Americans of Japanese ancestry.

And there were heroes in this story, and one of the heroes was the FBI agent in charge in Hawaii during this period, a gentleman by the name of Robert Shivers. It is a little known fact that Robert Shivers arrived in Hawaii in 1939, probably, we would suspect, with perhaps the same sentiments as others that had come from the mainland to a strange place where Americans of Japanese ancestry were 38 percent of the population, at a time when the United States knew it was going to war with Japan and all Americans of Japanese ancestry really were suspect in some people's eyes, and yet only 1,500 were rounded up. Why was that? Because Agent Shivers spent 2 years trying to understand the community, because he went out into the community. He said that after conferring with people in Hawaii, citizens that had lived in this multiethnic society, he said this: ``It was not until I conferred with you that I began to understand the complex racial conditions in

Hawaii. You gave me a group of loyal citizens of Japanese ancestry who proved invaluable in helping me shape my course." And it is obvious to all of us now in retrospect, after the action of this Congress in issuing an apology and in the actions to evaluate the work of our government during the Second World War in cases such as Koramatsu, it is obvious that had Agent Shivers not been the person that he was, no doubt Americans of Japanese ancestry in Hawaii would have met the same basic conditions as occurred to their colleagues and their family members on the mainland.

So, Mr. Speaker, I give these words. I give these words because again I say that what we can all take out of the occurrence of the remarks by our colleague is not to drag him over the coals. I think we are way beyond that. That is not what this is about. This is simply an opportunity again for us to remember, all of us to remember, that good people can sometimes have thoughts that are just not right, and it is simply a matter of not knowing.

So we can look to history in this case. We can look to the history of the Americans of Japanese ancestry. They were not unique. The same thing happened to Americans of German ancestry, Americans of Italian ancestry. And we can say to ourselves that there is absolutely no reason in the whole world why the same thing could not happen again under similar circumstances to ethnic groups in our country other than those three.

So as we consider this resolution which I have been very proud to co-sponsor, as we consider the motivation behind the resolution, and I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. Honda) for introducing this resolution, let us consider again that this is a time simply for us to all pause, let us take a deep breath, and let us just remember what happened and think to ourselves is there any reason whatsoever to assume that without constant vigilance, constant caution, and constant remembrance could it not happen again? That is the lesson for us to carry outside of this unfortunate occurrence, and that is the lesson that my own home State of Hawaii can offer to our country and the rest of the world.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. Case) for his words and the experiences that he has shared with us because I think that at times the lesson is sometimes missed, that Members from Hawaii who are of Japanese ancestry volunteered for the service with the 101st battalion and joining forces with the 442 here in the mainland.

[Time: 20:45]

One of the things that they learned, the Japanese Americans from Hawaii, was that when they became part of the 442 with the mainland Japanese Americans, they often wondered why they were different from the Japanese Americans from Hawaii, because they grew up on a pretty predominant and highly populated island with a lot of Japanese Americans, whereas the Americans of Japanese descent on the mainland were a little different. Their attitude and view of life was different.

It was not until some of the Members from Hawaii visited the camps, along with their colleagues whose parents were incarcerated, that they truly understood the unfairness and injustice of executive order 9066.

So we say we did not know, and so it is that House Resolution 56 is to educate and to further educate our communities in this country and also other members of this globe.

Mr. Speaker, if I may ask the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Inslee) if he would mind sharing some of his thoughts.

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue, bringing this to our Nation's attention with this resolution. The reason I have come to join the gentleman this evening to talk about this important national matter is I represent the first district in the State of Washington, in the Seattle area; and I live in a place called Bainbridge Island, a little island directly across Puget Sound from Seattle.

Back in the 1940s, pursuant to an order of the American President, the United States Army marched 277 Americans of Japanese American descent down to the Taylor Landing dock and at bayonet point essentially sent them to camps for the duration of the war.

These were our neighbors on Bainbridge Island, good people, great people, some of whom still live on Bainbridge Island; and we think it is appropriate and important for the Nation to remember that injustice, that mistake, where an America did succumb to fear, and this day of remembrance is one way to do that.

The reason I think it is important for America to do that is two-fold: first to honor those individuals who went through this experience, but had their sons and daughters serving in the military during World War II, and then returned, a lot of them, to Bainbridge Island to become important parts and leaders of the community, and we want to honor their commitment and contributions to our national and local communities.

But I also think it is very important for us in the future for us to learn from this experience, because we are undergoing some similar strains right now. We understand what fear is again like, like we experienced in the 1940s; and it is very important for us to realize what can happen if you succumb to fear, what can happen to civil liberties, what can happen to civil rights, what can happen to your basic freedoms. So learning from that experience is important that we not replicate it and we not again give in to our sense of fear that the Nation may hold.

I should alert the gentleman, as you know, we are doing some things on Bainbridge Island. We are starting a national park, a national memorial, we hope, in a bill the gentleman helped pass the last session of Congress that the President has now signed, which will memorialize this event at the very site where the very first Japanese Americans were interned. These were the first Americans who were subjected to this, the very first detainees.

Some great people on Bainbridge Island, a fellow named Clarence Moriwaki is doing tremendous work, Frank Kinamoto, to memorialize this event and to teach Americans for future generations about what can happen when we succumb to fear. So this is one part of telling this story, and I am happy to be able to.

I will tell you just one good story, if I can, about Bainbridge Island, though. There was a lot of sorrow and sadness, and I have always been so impressed with people who went through this experience but came home willing to be good Americans and leaders in their local community and got over, maybe did not get over, but surmounted the sense of bitterness that certainly must have been there. I have just been so admiring of that sense of courage and true commitment to America.

But another little spirit that I saw, we dedicated a county park to a place where a radio interception facility was on Bainbridge that actually intercepted the December 7 radio transmission to the Japanese ambassador in Washington D.C.

One of the fellows intercepting those messages on the day that my neighbors were interned, he took a day of furlough and went down to one of his buddies to get his refrigerator and his pickup truck to make sure he protected them all during the war for his pal. He took a day's furlough to do it. That is part of the American

spirit too.

I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership to make sure that America knows this story.

Mr. HONDA. I thank the gentleman from Washington, especially for his leadership and having set aside Bainbridge Island as an educational activity and also in memory and commemorating the folks who were interned from that community.

Also I think it is appropriate to mention that there have been many stories that come to light when we talk about the day of remembrance, one of which is the story of a young man by the name of Ralph Laso from East L.A. whose friends were Japanese Americans, and when they were being incarcerated he argued this is not right; they are not enemies. He himself decided to join a family and to be incarcerated himself along with the family.

But there are many other stories that can be told if we move forward with the resolution on the Day of Remembrance.

I would like to ask the gentlewoman from the gem of the Pacific, the great territory of the Island of Guam (Ms. Bordallo), to share her thoughts.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his very, very wonderful description of my island home.

I am pleased to join my colleagues this evening in this most important dialogue. I want to thank our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. Honda), for his leadership on these issues, and in particular for his sponsorship of House Resolution 56, which seeks to increase our awareness and further public understanding of the internment of American citizens during World War II.

The internment of the Japanese Americans, German Americans, and Italian Americans was a grave injustice and a violation of their civil rights. There are lessons to be learned from this experience, and these lessons cannot be learned without discussing and understanding the circumstances surrounding the enactment of executive order 9066.

We must be cognizant of the fragile nature of our civil rights, which have been won on the battlefield and in the halls of Congress. We must always be mindful of the threats to our freedom and security, and likewise we must be mindful of how our own perceptions of our fellow Americans and our own prejudices affect our very freedom.

These are not academic issues in a history book. These are experiences that must be understood in the context of the current debate on homeland security. It is now more important than ever because of the many issues that have arisen concerning security in the aftermath of September 11.

As we reflect on these events of World War II, we are appalled at our actions toward fellow citizens. We must be mindful that our actions today will be subjected to the same hindsight. As we wage the war on terrorism and face the possibility of war with Iraq, the need for awareness and education is especially important. We must ensure that we have an understanding of who among us is the threat, not based on race, color or religion, but

based on facts that will withstand the scrutiny of history. As we fight for our freedom and security, let us not cast aside our own humanity.

Mr. Speaker, as difficult as it is, we must come to terms with our national mistakes, just as we celebrate our national achievements. We must acknowledge our misgivings in the past if we are to strengthen our ability to avoid mistakes in the future.

As President Ford said in 1976 when he formally rescinded executive order 9066, learning from our mistakes is not pleasant, but we must do so if we want to avoid repeating them.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for this opportunity to be here tonight to support this resolution.

Mr. HONDA. I thank the gentlewoman. The gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. Bordallo) continues the great legacy of Guam, of social justice and constitutional protection.

Mr. Speaker, if I may yield to a colleague of mine from Santa Clara County, a very personable person, someone who always does not mind speaking up when things need to be addressed, a long time friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Santa Clara County, California (Ms. Lofgren).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. Honda) for organizing this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, on February 19, 1942, then President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued executive order 9066 authorizing the Secretary of War to define military areas in which ``the right of any person to enter, remain in or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions are deemed necessary or desirable."

By the spring of 1942, California, Oregon, Washington, and Arizona were designated as military areas. In May of 1942, Santa Clara Valley Japanese Americans were ordered to ``close their affairs promptly and make their own arrangements for disposal of personal and real property."

Official government fliers were posted around parts of California instructing families to report to the area's assembly center, the Santa Anita Racetrack, with just the bare necessities, leaving behind their homes, their lives and most personal belongings. Because permanent camps were yet to be built, the Santa Anita Racetrack was home to Santa Clara Valley's internees for at least 3 months. Santa Clara Valley Japanese Americans were forced to live in horse stables until a permanent camp was built for them.

In America, 110,000 Japanese Americans and others, not aliens, people of German and Italian descent who were Americans, were evacuated from their homes and incarcerated throughout the duration of the war. Three thousand of those interned were Japanese Americans from Santa Clara Valley.

By the fall of 1942, most Santa Anita internees were transported to a camp far away from home, the Heart Mountain Internment Camp in northern Wyoming. Most remained there until the end of the war, 3 long years later.

The horror for Santa Clara County Japanese Americans did not end there. Upon release, approximately 7,000 people moved back to Santa Clara County. Most had no shelter, food, money, much less a job. Some returned to find their homes looted and destroyed. The San Jose Buddhist Church offered what it could, shelter and hot meals for most families. In Santa Clara County, the family of Bob Peckham, later to become Federal District Court Judge Bob Peckham, took title to the property of some Japanese American

neighbors and was able to preserve that property and return it at the end of the internment so some people in our area did not lose their homes and businesses.

All of this happened before I was born, but I remember very well learning about it even before it was added to the history books. My mother was a young woman in 1942. My dad was in the Army, and she was building airplanes at the Douglas aircraft factory for the war effort.

She told me when I was young about driving past the race track and how ashamed and guilty she felt. There were people locked up at the race track living in horse stables who she knew had done nothing wrong. People who had been her neighbors had been rounded up suddenly and taken away.

My mother told me how helpless she felt. She knew what her government was doing was wrong, but she did not know how to change it. She felt powerless, but she also felt guilty and ashamed because of what the United States Government had done. She was a life-long Democrat and cast her first Presidential vote for FDR, but she never agreed about what he did to her neighbors.

There was no apology, no financial support, no help from the Federal Government until many years later. On February 19, 1976, President Gerald Ford formally rescinded executive order 9066.

[Time: 21:00]

And in 1980 Congress funded the adopted legislation, establishing the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment. August 10, 1988, the Civil Liberties Act was signed into law, authorizing payments of $20,000 to each person that suffered from internment and established the Office of Redress to identify, locate, and pay these individuals. Most importantly, an apology was finally given.

By then, my neighbors and my parents' neighbors who had been unjustly incarcerated, our friend, Ed, Jimmy, dad's neighbors, Ted, Raiko, Sam, and many others, received at long last an apology. Some lived long enough to receive the compensation provided for in the law.

These efforts were celebrated in the community of Japanese Americans. But they were also celebrated in the broader community, because Americans who were not incarcerated, like my mother, felt the shame and the guilt. And while an apology could not undo the injustice and the compensation did not fully cover the loss, it helped that our country admitted the mistake and tried to make amends.

I am proud to say that on February 5 of this year, my colleague from Santa Clara County (Mr. Honda) introduced H. Res. 56, a resolution supporting the goals of the Japanese, German, and Italian American communities in recognizing a national day of remembrance and to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and internment of individuals and families during World War II. This resolution has been referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary on which I serve and currently has over 60 cosponsors.

Today, I support the resolution of the gentleman from California (Mr. Honda) to recognize February 19 as a Day of Remembrance. It is the least we can do, spend one day per year reflecting on the horrors of internment, remember those who suffered, and work to find ways never to repeat that page in history. I would urge the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, my colleague, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr.

Sensenbrenner), to quickly schedule action for this important resolution so that the country can, once again, engage in healing, and I honor my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. Honda) for his efforts in helping all Americans to heal.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Santa Clara County for especially sharing the experience of her interactions with her mom and the way her mom felt when the Japanese were taken away, and then the sense that this country can make amends for the wrongs that have occurred. The signing and the final recognition of wrongdoing by this government through the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, signed by President Reagan when he said, upon signing he said, ``This is a great day for America." And when President Ford rescinded 9066, he indicated, as the gentlewoman from Santa Clara said, that it was an ordinance that should have never been there.

The whole point of the Day of Remembrance resolution is about learning, is about being persistent about the lessons that we have learned from the Japanese American experience that is really an American lesson on the Constitution and is also a lesson of the American character, where, upon reconciliation, there is a healing. There is a healing among not only those who were incarcerated, but also healing among those who were affected but maybe not necessarily incarcerated. So victims are both those who were directly victimized and those who were indirectly victimized by a bad action of our government.

Also, the further learning, when we talk about the Day of Remembrance, is that other communities get to reflect upon their own experience at that time and project into the future whether this kind of thing should happen again.

For example, a few years ago when we did this in the State of California, there was also a movement and discussion among the Italian communities and there was a reawakening of the experiences that they experienced in World War II when Executive Order 9066 was applied, was applied to Italian Americans and German Americans. And upon reflection, they found out that they too were subjected to embarrassment, to ridicule. One of the stories that came out, because of the order by General DeWitt that no persons who are aliens in the United States may live west of highway 1, which is along the coast, forced families to separate themselves, Italian American families who were engaged in the fishing industry whose parents and grandparents had to live in tents across the road while the children lived in the homes. It was things like this they started to remember and started to chronicle among themselves and to teach their children that these kinds of actions by government is not acceptable. Upon the receipt of the apology, we found that there was healing and there was teaching going on among, not only among themselves, but among the greater population of this country.

As a teacher, I want to reemphasize the necessity for this resolution, that it continues to teach us the old maxim that those of us who do not learn from the mistakes of our past are doomed to repeat them.

So in today's current light, I just want to personally reemphasize that national security is my highest priority, is our highest priority, and I support efforts to fight our war against terrorism. But we also understand that in doing so, we must not have a failure among our political leadership, we must not fall back on more hysteria, we must not fall back to racial prejudice and discrimination and profiling.

So today, it is critically important, more than ever, to speak up against possible unjust policies that may come before this body, and we must also be able to speak to it. And it is

even more important than ever to educate Americans of the Japanese American experience during World War II, as well as the experience of other groups like the Japanese Latin Americans who were extricated from Latin America, brought over here, had their documents taken away from them, and becoming individuals without a country to be used as pawns in exchange for POWs. And then the German and Italian Americans who were also victimized.

In order to learn the important lessons from our own history, I did introduce H.R. 56, the Day of Remembrance resolution here in this body. Teaching the lessons of those dark days is more important today than it ever was ... we must continue to learn from our history.

There is a maturity in this country that I am very proud of. That maturity says we can learn from our mistakes of the past and we can also teach others of our lessons that we have learned from our past. We have learned that the Executive Order 9066 was not signed out of military necessity, was not signed out of national security, was not signed out of personal safety and security of the Japanese American, but the Commission on Wartime Internment and Relocation of Civilians said, and they concluded, that it was a result of racial prejudice, war hysteria, and the failure of political leadership.

Today, as we heard from our colleagues today, Mr. Speaker, that this leadership must not fail again.

and to that end, we must continuously teach ourselves and reteach ourselves and remember the lessons of the past so that we do not repeat them again. It is a country like the United States, it is a country like this country that my father, although he was interned with the rest of his family, and although he even volunteered for the military intelligence service to teach language to the naval intelligence officers, that he held this sense of loyalty to this country, even though the families were incarcerated. And he taught us that in spite of these experiences, that we, his children, must be a good reflection of his loyalty and that we, as we grow up, must become more American than anybody else that we could run into, and that we must be 110 percent American. Part of that Americanism is to never, ever make the same mistakes again.

We learned from that experience in 1942, and we learned from the experience of 9/11, that this Constitution of this country is never tested in times of tranquility, that our Constitution is always tested in times of trauma, tragedy, terrorism, and tension, and that the very principles of our Constitution need to be, continuously need to be taught until it is ingrained in our own character, so that every decision we make as a citizen, as adults, as children, as students and as policymakers, that we will always be true to the principles of our Constitution. For it is for those reasons why people around this world fight to come to this country and be part of this country, struggle to be a part of this democracy, because they know that the protection of this Constitution is the American dream. The protection of our Constitution is that which our forefathers and our veterans have shed their blood and sacrificed their limbs and lives so that our Constitution may live and really be reflected in every action that we have, not only in this body, but by every action of every citizen of this country.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for this opportunity to bring Resolution 56, the Day of Remembrance, before this body.

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